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ART. IX. — *Geschichte der Colonisation von Neu-England. Von den ersten Niederlassungen daselbst im Jahre 1607, bis zur Einführung der Provinzialverfassung von Massachusetts im Jahre 1692.* Nach den Quellen bearbeitet, von TALVJ. Leipzig : F. A. Brockhaus. 1847. 8vo. pp. 709.

EXACTLY two hundred and forty years ago, the first remittance ever made by an English colony in America was sent from Virginia. "A drunken ship, laden with a parcel of glittering dirt, which they very sanguinely concluded to be gold dust," sailed from Jamestown ; henceforth the gold fever raged as fiercely as during the first conquest of Mexico and Peru. "There was no thought," says Stith, the historian of Virginia, "no discourse, no hope, and no work, but to dig gold, wash gold, refine gold, and load gold." It soon appeared that "the dirt" was not gold ; but the rabble rout of colonists, who were then seeking fortune in North America some dozen years before the arrival of the Puritans of Plymouth, were buoyed up a little while longer by the rigmarole stories of the natives. The Indians all concurred in the relation, that within ten days' journey towards the setting sun, there was a country where gold might be washed out of the sand, and where the crucible was a familiar instrument ; "but," says Bancroft, in 1834, "inquiry was always baffled, and the regions of gold remained for two centuries an undiscovered land." Strange that, a few years after these two centuries had elapsed, these golden dreams should in their wildest extent have become realities. The Anglo-American empire has reached in a few strides from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and on its western verge, as two centuries and a half ago upon its eastern, there is now no discourse and no work but "to dig gold, wash gold, refine gold, and load gold." In a few short years, moreover, the fiction of the Indian will become fact, and the vision which inspired the early navigators will, in a certain sense, be realized. When the Pacific railroad is completed, not only will the gold regions be brought within a "ten days' journey towards the setting sun," but the western passage to the Indies and Cathay will be established.

Probably the character of the adventurers who are the pres-

ent pioneers of civilization in the neighborhood of San Francisco does not vary materially from that of their predecessors at the beginning of the seventeenth century in Virginia. A miscellaneous collection of "discarded serving-men and tapsters trade-fallen," mingled with better born adventurers of broken fortunes, "rovers of many climes, reckless of danger, greedy of gold, such as an overcloyed country vomits forth," formed, no doubt, the basis, or to use the modern phrase, the bone and sinew, of the early Atlantic colonies in North America. They were actuated by the same great object which inspires the Pacific adventurers now ; but it is probable that the advantage in character belongs to the Californians. Besides the presence of a considerable number of emigrants of a better class, who are led thither by political or commercial objects, there is a certain pseudo-patriotism which may be supposed to mingle with the motives of the multitude now farthest advanced in prosecuting that vast system of *internal colonization*, which distinguishes the polity of this country from that of any other known in history. They are carrying the lengthening chain which is to bind the remotest and the nearest portions of the empire together. They carry their country's flag. They fulfil the mission which has been impressed upon the country, and felt in every generation since it was first colonized, to carry the Anglo-American standard towards the setting sun. The manifest-destiny man, who was last seen beyond the Rio Grande, before the Mexican war, refusing with drunken enthusiasm to return, and expressing a sublime confidence that his country would reach him before he could find time to get back to his country, cannot but command our sympathy.

There was no such generous motive among the early Atlantic colonists. A scheme was projected, a voyage undertaken, by some gentleman of substance, who, if adventurous, personally commanded, first "sharking up a troop of landless resolute," who were willing, in the hope of booty of one kind or another, to follow his fortunes. If gold had been really found in Virginia, as in our day in California, the history of this country would have been very different ; and the lovers of that kind of speculation which deals with history as it might have been, supposing that nothing ever happened which did happen, and that every thing happened which did

not, could in no way more profitably employ themselves than in writing the history of North America for the last two and a half centuries, upon the supposition that the Sacramento had flowed in the place of the James.

As it is, the influence of America upon Europe and upon the world has been more extensive and more durable than it could have been under any other imaginable historical circumstances. Amid the volcanic convulsions of the last two years, by which the political surface of Europe has been so fearfully riven, this trans-Atlantic democracy has preserved so serene and prosperous an appearance, that the makers of constitutions, and the political philosophers of Europe, are examining the theory of the United States' government and the history of the country with more attention than ever. The American constitution is getting to be one of the oldest forms of polity in the world. This great empire, so much superior in extent and importance to any one ever acquired and governed by the Demos before, without limit or hinderance from any other political power, would hardly have grown up from the seeds thrown by the wayside by the early planters of Southern Virginia, or by the trading colonists of Massachusetts. This vast democracy was rather the work, the unconscious work, of a different set of adventurers. From 1620 to 1630, the region of ice and granite, now called New England, was taken into the grasp of those men of ice and granite called the Puritans. That grasp never slackened nor flinched, although it clutched no gold. A single idea led those rigid colonists hither. Supported by that single idea, they maintained their position in spite of obstacles enough to freeze the souls of common men, — in spite of starvation, consumption, pestilence, scurvy, arctic winters, tropical summers, tomahawks, wolves, and wild-cats, — all the dangers of the wilderness, all the loss of civilization and its advantages; and the result, the unintentional result, as we believe, has been the establishment of the great American democracy. The idea of a pure church, which was the single idea of New England colonization, has after two centuries produced a pure democracy.

Among the more recent European works upon America, the book whose title is mentioned in our rubric deserves a prominent place. It is a history of the colonization of New

England, by Talvj. This fantastic combination of letters half conceals and half reveals the name of Mrs. Robinson, wife of the eminent scholar, traveller, and writer, Dr. Robinson, the author of "*Biblical Researches in Palestine.*" We believe the letters to be the initials of her maiden German name. The lady is also the author of "*Historical Characteristics of the National Ballads of Germanic Nations,*" a work which we have never had the good fortune to see.

The history of New England has considerable merit, but it is strongly marked with national characteristics. We consider the German language to be less adapted to narrative, and particularly to historical narrative, than any language of Europe with which we are acquainted. Hardly any German, even among the acknowledged classical authors, writes a good prose style. Taking out Goethe and Lessing, we hardly know an individual whose style is to our taste. German prose is, to the intensest degree, prosy. Even Schiller, with his heart of fire and his glowing imagination, seems like his own "*Pegasus in harness,*" when toiling along the dusty highway of prose. His historical works, notwithstanding the earnestness of purpose, vigorous fancy, and power of picturesque description which they display, always seem like unfinished works of art, historical dramas in the block, waiting for the finishing strokes of the chisel which were to convert them into poetry. How inestimable would be such writers as Niebuhr and Heeren, for example, to say nothing of the more recent historians of Germany, if their style was not so wearisome. The power to sink the shaft, to explore and exhaust the mines of history, is rarely united with the art of coining the ore into the polished and ornamental shape which shall circulate through the civilized world. But the Germans have to contend with the structure of their language, as well as with a slight natural propensity to be tedious. Even the Dutch historians are better than the German, more picturesque and more rapid in narration. The reason is, we suppose, that their language has approached more nearly to the directness of its Teutonic sister, the Anglo-Saxon, and has in a measure lost that feature which makes the German so disagreeable a language for story-telling, whether of truth or fiction; we mean the constant tendency to involutions. If the whole force of a sentence is not revealed till the last word,

as is required in German, and if the sentence goes on interminably, owing to the prolixity of the author, the chance is, that the reader will become wearied before he arrive at the last word, and so lose the pith and marrow of the whole period. The best writers have in part surmounted the difficulty by a terse, rapid, and aphoristic style; but in general, the prose drags itself in close convolutions along, parenthesis within parenthesis, coil within coil, till the sense is strangled to death, or the reader's power and patience to apprehend it, which comes to the same thing. German prose, in short, is so formidable and elaborate a language, that a German *Bourgeois gentilhomme* might well be more astonished than M. Jourdain, if informed that he had been speaking it all his life.

With these opinions of the ordinary style of German narrators, it may be imagined that we approached with some shivering a ponderous volume of 700 mortal octavo pages, containing a German history of New England and its colonization. Important a chapter as it is in human history, and the more interesting as its real results are but just beginning to develop themselves, it must be admitted that there is a dreariness about the actors and the scene where they play their parts. Besides, the story has been handled so often, there have been so many Fourths of July, so many Twentysseconds of December, and so many discourses, historical novels, hymns, and other lively effusions have been engendered in the course of years, that we had begun to conceive an involuntary aversion to the very name of Puritan. We were getting to be of Aguecheek's humor, who, at the bare suggestion that Malvolio was "a kind of Puritan," was for "beating him like a dog;" and now, after somewhat reluctantly reading this faithful and honest German chronicle of our pious Pilgrim ancestors, we confess that our expectations have not been very much balked in any particular.

The subject has not grown more lively under the handling of Talvj, nor is Talvj's style more vivacious or epigrammatic than that of her countrymen in general. The work has the defects and the virtues of its country. It must be confessed that it is somewhat tedious. It has hardly freshness enough, either of fact or of disquisition, to make its length pardonable by the American reader; and we should doubt whether the

German public would be more interested by so elaborate a digest of all the details of New England colonization as is here presented to them.

The secret of Bancroft's success is, that by aid of a vigorous imagination, and a crisp, nervous style, he has been enabled, by a few sudden strokes, to reveal startling and brilliant pictures, over which the dust had collected and hardened, as it seemed, forever. It is a work rather of genius than of laborious detail. Many can burn the midnight oil; but it is the mortal favored by the genie alone, who can accomplish miracles by a few rubs on the old, rusty lamp.

Having thus stated some general objections to the work, we are more at liberty to praise it for certain remarkable excellencies. It is perfectly trustworthy as to facts. It is written entirely from the original sources, and we are not aware a single event, important or trifling, in the whole history of the period, which has been omitted. We have been in several places astonished at the scrupulous accuracy with which the author has consulted all the authorities, and given the most approved version of certain obscure and disputed matters. We are hardly acquainted with any work of importance, chronicle, journal, or tract, which has not been consulted. The subject is fairly exhausted. The eleventh chapter, in particular, containing a sketch of the constitutional history of the Massachusetts Colony, is very skilfully written. The writer's sympathies are entirely with the colonists; her politics are of the democratic school. Still, she has attained to a considerable degree of impartiality; and we would instance her treatment of the subject of the early criminal code, in which, although in the main a disciple of Bancroft, she has taken up the opposite opinion to his, and in our view the correct one, and treated it with much acuteness, as a good specimen of her ability. "Hardly a nation of Europe has as yet made its criminal law as humane as that of early New England," says Bancroft (I. p. 265.) "The statute books of European realms," says Talvj, "have their origin in the very commencement of civilization. Is it to be accounted merit and mildness in the Puritans, that they did not bring with them into the wilderness, and reproduce in the seventeenth century, many a bloody edict, — as for example, the cruel chase and forest ordinances of the Normans, — dating

from the darkest period of the middle ages, and existing for centuries only upon paper?" (p. 321.)

This is the true ground. The constitutions of New England were, to a great degree, *a priori* forms of government. It was no merit that punishment was not inflicted, when the crime could by no possibility exist. To steal a trained falcon, for example, was punished with excommunication by the Norman laws. It was no proof of mildness that the Puritans did not reenact this provision, seeing that there were no trained falcons in New England to steal. To praise the mildness of a system under which men were sold as slaves for immoralities, mutilated for censuring the magistrates, and put to death for professing a different religious belief from Calvinism, is not, we think, the best way to serve the cause of the Puritans. In fact, notwithstanding the discrimination shown in this passage and several others of the work under consideration, we are afraid that, upon the whole, there is too much sympathy shown for the vices of the early settlers. A foreigner, writing in the middle of the nineteenth century, might perhaps have been expected

"from the heights of contemplation
To view the feeble-joints men totter on,"

with somewhat more success than she has done.

The Puritans deserve to be treated with more justice than they have yet received. Indiscriminate and fulsome eulogy, or virulent abuse, has been their portion for the last two centuries. They deserve to be judged; they can afford to be weighed in the scales of justice, and the time seems to have come to look at them with faces as grim as their own, and to tell them to their beards exactly what people think of them. Their virtues were many, and among the noblest which can adorn humanity; indomitable courage, patience, fortitude, self-denial, generosity, extreme purity of morals, piety, energy and singleness of purpose almost superhuman, — all these elements of the heroic, and even the saintly, they possessed in an eminent degree, and no man can gainsay it. Their virtues were many and colossal; their vices were few but formidable, for they were intolerance, cruelty, tyranny, and bigotry.

These men have become so important as the founders in a great degree of a vast empire, and their shades rise upon us

in such imposing forms, that it is due to them as well as to their descendants to judge them justly. We believe, that the habit of pouring out unmeasured praise upon the founders of New England has created a prejudice against them which is singularly unjust. We have no intention, however, at the present moment, of going into the general subject of the Puritanic character; and we pass to the consideration of another matter of importance to any history of New England.

We have already stated, that our author is perfectly trustworthy as to matters of fact, and that the narrative is founded entirely upon contemporaneous authority. The inferences throughout the volume are more questionable. In fact, the present history belongs to the Bancroft school, and it is not therefore surprising that the colonization of New England is treated as a *democratic* movement. Now, there is no doubt that a democracy, the most extensive and powerful which the world ever saw, has been the result of that movement, combined with many other and subsequent causes; there is no doubt, too, that the seeds of political liberty were unconsciously contained and concealed in the great principle of resistance to, or rather of flight from, religious oppression, which was the main-spring of the movement; but to say that the forefathers of New England came here to establish a democracy seems to us as erroneous as it would be to say that the fugitives from the great Gothic invasion, who took refuge, like beavers, in the lagunes of the Adriatic, meant to establish a commercial aristocracy, and carried the *Libro d'oro* with them; or that the hundred and sixteen paupers sent out, in 1732, by a humane society to begin the settlement of Georgia, where negroes and rum were absolutely prohibited, could have anticipated such a line of chivalrous descendants, attended by hundreds of thousands of slaves, and certainly not distinguished for total abstinence, as now inhabit the region between the Savannah and the Altamaha. Democracy was, no doubt, the result of the settlement of America in the seventeenth century, and the principles of New England colonization had much to do with preparing such a result; but the real reason why the democratic principle prevailed was because it is a true principle, and because it never before had so fair a chance to develop itself. Practically and philosophically, the foundation of government is popular consent;

and in the seventeenth century, in a boundless wilderness, beginning as it were *de novo*, it was to be expected that men would eventually obey this principle ; and they have done so. Democracy in America has prevailed because it is the only *a priori* form of government that, under all the circumstances, could have been established, or could have possessed the elements of truth and life.

The New England fathers, however, had no notion of establishing a democracy. There was no "such stuff in their thoughts." The movement hither was purely a theological movement. They came to the wilderness because the Reformation, which had been comparatively successful upon the continent of Europe, had been balked in England ; because Archbishop Laud was as much a Catholic as if he had accepted, instead of declining, the Cardinal's hat ; and because they chose to be married without rings, to hear prayers without lawn sleeves, to be baptized without holy water, and to be buried without sign of the cross. The Plymouth colony, which was the first organized band of religious emigrants who arrived in New England, was, as is well known, but a little refugee congregation of dissenters, one hundred and one in number, men, women, and children all told. The Plymouth rock compact was drawn up *ex necessitate*, and was rather intended as a solemn agreement among a very few individuals to stand by and support each other, under very trying circumstances, than as a formal annunciation of political principles. We were, therefore, not quite prepared for the burst of enthusiasm, with which our author, after quoting the whole of that admirable and eloquent little document, proceeds to comment upon it in such language as the following : —

"Thus, then, did the cabin of the Mayflower become the birthplace of the first democratic constitution of the present free states, which is yet regarded by their remote descendants with joyful pride as the foundation of their freedom and independence." p. 84.

And thus Bancroft, the founder of the school, in speaking of the same subject, expatiates : —

"This was the birthplace of constitutional liberty. The middle age had been familiar with charters and constitutions ; but they had been merely compacts for immunities, partial enfranchise-

ments, patents of nobility, concessions of municipal privileges, or limitations of the sovereign power in favor of feudal institutions. *In the cabin of the Mayflower humanity recovered its rights*, and instituted government on the basis of 'equal laws' for the 'general good.' John Carver was immediately and unanimously chosen governor for the year." *Bancroft*, I. 310.

And if he had been as immediately and unanimously chosen Grand Duke of Moratiggan, the dignity to descend to his heirs general, these United States would have been a democracy notwithstanding.

This pompous way of dealing with very admirable but very humble people, we confess, was never much to our taste. We believe, that if John Carver and William Bradford could have been informed, that "humanity recovered its rights" in the cabin of their 160 ton vessel, they would have been considerably astonished. If told, that their modest little agreement would be regarded, after two centuries and a half, by twenty millions of white men with their three millions of slaves as "the foundation of their freedom and independence," and that this document of mutual engagement, which was drawn up for a temporary purpose, while they were waiting for "a concession of municipal privileges" from the crown, was intended *ex propria vi* to supersede all "charters, patents, and concessions," we believe they would be as much puzzled to understand American liberty as American slavery, and would believe themselves to be about as much the founders of the one as of the other.

This little pious church congregation had but one object; they wished a resting place for the soles of their feet. They had been hunted out of England because they would not conform to the Episcopal worship, and because their foreheads were branded, their tongues bored with red hot irons, and their ears cropped from their heads, if they did not. They had fled to Holland; but they liked not to see their children growing up into Dutchmen, with all the loose, Sabbath-breaking, slipshod, continental habits which were most odious to their nostrils. To find a religious asylum, to find a place where they might "hide themselves," as Milton expresses it, "from the fury of the Bishops," they came to this wilderness. It was a heroic, a pathetic determination. It was carried out with an iron energy, an unwavering courage.

The memory of such men will live forever. A great and virtuous thought has made the men immortal who carried it into action under so many circumstances of peril and adversity. But all this is no reason for applauding them for doing things which they never contemplated. They came here as loyal subjects of a monarchy, and they and their descendants lived and died as such. They never thought of establishing the majesty of the people, and it was a long time after they were in their graves before the majesty of the people established itself. The little congregation wanted a place in which to hold their meetings, where they would not be in constant fear of their lives. They had lived so long in fear of the bishops, that the savages and the beasts of the wilderness had no terrors for them. Still, they had no more intention of establishing a democracy than they had, when in Holland, of disturbing the Stadtholder, or of overthrowing the power of their High Mightinesses. They thought, at first, of going to Guiana. If they had gone to Guiana, we doubt if Demerara would have been at this moment the capital of a great democracy, and we doubt as little that these United States would have had the same polity which they now have. A great many shuttles have woven the mingled woof of American liberty.

The very language of the Plymouth manifesto precludes the idea of democracy. "*We, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign lord, King James*, having undertaken, for the glory of God and advancement of the Christian faith and *honor of our king and country*, a voyage," &c. &c. How could forty-one persons, acknowledging themselves with such particular, and even unnecessary, scrupulousness as the "loyal subjects of their dread sovereign," dream of announcing the sovereignty of the people. If their notions were democratic, the people, the Demos, was sovereign, and of course there would have been no talk of the dread sovereign lord, King James. They announce but one object for their emigration, apart from "the glory of God," and that is the "honor of their king and country." Not a word about civil, or even religious, liberty; not a hint about elevating the condition of the people; nothing but loyalty to king and country, in spite of all the tyranny under which they had suffered.

In fact, the only expressions upon which this whole democratic theory is built are, that the laws shall be "just and

equal," and convenient for the "general good of the colony." Why, a ukase from the Senate Chamber of Russia might be, and for aught we know, is couched in the same language. To be sure, the ukases are not just and equal; but neither were the laws of Plymouth Colony, as other nonconformists, banished and maltreated by these refugee nonconformists, learned to their cost.

The fact is, as everybody knows, that these colonists drew up this document as a temporary compact, because they were in a state of anarchy. They had been brought against their intention to Plymouth, and they had neither right of property nor jurisdiction there. So far from dreaming of a "constitution," which should be the "foundation of freedom and independence," — so far from dispensing with, or despising, all charters, patents, and concessions, their chief anxiety was to get a land patent from the Plymouth Company in England, and a charter from the crown; and in the meantime, to go on as well as they could without it. And they did go on admirably, for they were virtuous, brave, single-hearted, self-sacrificing men and women; but they tried hard enough for their patent and charter. Isaac Atherton made two or three unsuccessful voyages to England for the purpose; and when, at last, they obtained a grant of land from the company, "the King's grant miscarried."

We think that too much political importance has been attached to the history of the Plymouth Colony by our author and by Mr. Bancroft. The moral value of the picture is inestimable; but it was, after all, a colony in miniature. Well ordered and regulated, peaceful, humble, and contented, they were yet, after ten years, only 300 in number. "*The State*," says Bancroft, (I. p. 322,) "was governed, like our towns, as a strict democracy, and the people were frequently convened to decide on executive, not less than on judicial, questions." Considering that "the State," as he rather pompously styles the little community, had by no means as many inhabitants as a first class hotel or steamboat in these days, and would hardly have been entitled to a representative to our General Court, it was not singular that the people were convened in primary assemblies. The "mass meeting" of citizens would not probably have amounted to more than fifty or sixty men. As to the confu-

sion of the executive, legislative, and judicial functions, which is hardly to be mentioned as a subject of congratulation, it sprang from the very necessity of the case. They had no charter of government from the crown. They were loyal subjects of their sovereign, and still hoped to obtain one. In the meantime, they considered themselves a church congregation, and governed themselves accordingly. They were never in any sense a state. "Until this period," (1630,) says Marshall, (I. p. 95,) "they possessed no other title to their lands than is afforded by occupancy. In that year, they obtained a grant of property from the new Plymouth Company, but were never incorporated as a body politic by royal charter. Having derived no power from parliament or the king, and being totally disregarded by the Plymouth Company, they appear to have remained a mere voluntary association until their union with a younger and more powerful sister."

That younger and more powerful sister was even less democratically inclined than the Plymouth Colony, although the same school of writers are inclined to take the same view of the one as of the other. The Massachusetts Colony originated in the same principle as that of the Plymouth settlement, — a desire to establish the pure church. It was determined to establish an asylum upon a large scale for nonconformists, and to make a considerable land purchase accordingly from the great Plymouth Company. An association was accordingly incorporated, mostly of persons belonging to the greater and lesser nobility of England, who should purchase the territory and send out the colonists. It was a land company, a fish company, a trading company, a fur company, an agricultural and commercial company, empowered by the crown to make laws for the wilderness not repugnant to the laws of England. The freemen, that is to say, the stockholders or adventurers, were to choose the officers, — a Governor, Deputy Governor, and Assistants or Board of Directors, as is usual in corporations. Those officers were to live at home, and direct the operations of the colonists from Threadneedle Street; and if great profits and a great empire should grow out of the speculation, so much the better for the parties interested. As, however, the only persons much in earnest in the matter were those with whom the religious idea was the predominant, or indeed the sole object, and as certain gentlemen of "quality,

figure, and estate," were willing to lead out a large emigration in person, provided the charter could be carried out with them to New England, it was a very natural and fortunate result, that a purely religious colony on a liberal scale, with the right to a certain extent of self-government, should take the place, and succeed to the rights, of the land company. The transfer of the charter was of very questionable legality ; but the whole success of the scheme depended upon it.

And thus a colony led and governed by men of aristocratic birth and education, with whom church reformation was the leading principle of their lives, came to be established in Massachusetts. They came here to establish, not liberty of conscience, but the true church. The nonconformists to that church were to fare no better than they had themselves fared at home. There was but one road to heaven, and every man in the colony should travel it. There was far less religious freedom then in Massachusetts than there is now in St. Petersburg. Neither was there much of the democratic element in their system. The government resided in the hands of the freemen, not of the population. To the original freemen were added, after the arrival of the colony in Massachusetts, many of the most considerable and influential of the "old planters," who had settled there between 1623 and 1630. At the first General Court, the freemen, to whom, according to the charter, belonged the whole legislative power, forced all the functions, legislative, judicial, administrative, and elective, upon the Board of Assistants. The "freemen" did not wish the trouble, or did not feel themselves equal to the responsibility, of directing the colony. The Assistants were to choose the magistrates from among themselves, make all the laws, and see to their execution.

There was but little democracy in all this. "God never intended," said Cotton, "the democracy as a proper government for church or commonwealth. If the people is to govern, who then are to be governed?" The early magistrates deserved the confidence of the people. They were single-hearted and pure, but stern and inflexible. Like Lear, they had that about them which men willingly call master — *authority*. Thus the people, as such, had no rights at all. The servants, artisans, all those who had no part in the patent, were governed as a matter of course, and governed with

extraordinary severity, too. Those to whom the franchise belonged repudiated it altogether. This lasted a considerable time; for it was not till the third General Court, in 1632, that the freemen appear to have taken part in the elections, and in the government. At the General Court in May that remarkable ordinance was passed, by which membership of a Calvinist church was established as an indispensable prerequisite of citizenship. Thus the aristocracy became a theocracy, and the colony was less democratic than ever. "The servant, the bondman," says Bancroft, anxious to detect the democratic element, "might be a member of the church, *and therefore* a freeman of the company. Other States have limited the possession of political rights to the opulent, to freeholders, to the first-born." This does not seem to us so clear. Church membership was but a condition superadded to what others may then have existed. The company had the right to admit freemen upon what conditions they chose. They now established this as one condition. Every freeman must be a church member; but it did not follow that every church member was *ex officio* a freeman. "No man," said the ordinance, "shall be admitted to the freedom of this body politic, but such as are members of some of the churches within the limits of the same." But it is not enacted that all church members shall be admitted. Women might become members of the church; but it nowhere appears that they thereby acquired the rights of citizenship. "The servant, the bondman, might be a member of the church," no doubt; although admission required an ordeal so very severe that two-thirds of the population were not members; but it does not appear that he was "therefore" free of the company; nor is it probable, from the character of the company and from the comparatively small number of freemen, that many of the bond were thus made free and voted into the company in the earlier years of the colony.

"Thus," says Talvj, with some enthusiasm, "was a theocracy established. God himself was to govern through his saints. They alone were to be the organs of a wisdom, which supported itself upon the old and new covenant, not upon human powers." (p. 218.) We can sympathize but little with this enthusiasm. To us, the system adopted by the early colonists seems to have been environed by

dangers. It is a proof of the vigor and truth of the democratic principle, that, although it was so far from the thoughts of the pilgrim fathers, it nevertheless established itself at a later day ; — that “humanity did recover its rights,” although not in the cabin of the *Mayflower* ; and it is equally a proof of the personal and political virtues of the leaders and of the masses of the emigration, that the whole frame of government was not vitiated by the extravagance of their principles.

To become a member of one of the churches was a very difficult matter. At the Thursday meetings in the “*Scruple shop*,” at Oxford, the point about which the chief anxiety was felt was the fixing the precise moment of new birth. Whoever could not do this satisfactorily had no claim to saintship. The same point was the most important one at the Thursday meetings which were immediately established upon the arrival of the company in Massachusetts. To fix the exact moment of justification was an indispensable pre-requisite for saintship and citizenship. Other conditions were however necessary, a formal speech of an hour long, before the assembled church, being one of the most painful for a modest person. “Here be required,” says Lechford, (*Plain Dealing, or Newes from New England*,) “such confessions and professions both in private and public, both by men and women, before they be admitted, that three parts of the country remain out of the church, so that in short time most of the people will remain unbaptized, if this course hold.”

There was no democracy, but on the contrary, great danger to the sacred principle of liberty, in such a polity. The enthusiastic but arrogant Calvinist, aspiring beyond the flaming halls of the universe, believing implicitly in his shadowy compact with Omnipotent power, fixing with audacious accuracy the precise moment at which the Deity had revealed himself to his enraptured vision and displayed to him his name inscribed since eternity upon the roll of predestined saints, priding himself upon his “justification,” and spurning his fellow worms because more holy or less humble than they, — such a man was a dangerous instrument to select as the exclusive and privileged ruler of an infant colony. To the personal character, the singular virtue, of the leaders of the emigration, it was owing, in a considerable degree, that these dangers were averted. They laid down voluntarily the arbi-

trary power with which the people had invested them. Had they been ambitious, instead of being humble, and had the territory been less extensive and surrounded by foreign nations in a state of civilization, a kind of sacerdotal aristocracy might have easily been established to last for centuries, — the Board of Assistants converted into a hereditary Senate, the Governor into a life magistrate, half patriarch, half Doge, and the people, continuing to acquiesce, as they did acquiesce at first, have come in time to consider the government as ordained of God from all eternity, and deserving of their respect, until at last the tyranny becoming intolerable, they would have awoke to find their liberty irrecoverably lost.

Religiously, socially, politically, the early government of Massachusetts was a severe, in many respects a tyrannical, system. It was at least to have been expected, that the men who had begun "this wilderness work" for conscience' sake, would have conceived a glimmering notion that others had a conscience as well as themselves. But it is a profound remark of Hume, that "no man would suffer martyrdom who would not willingly inflict it;" and these early New England martyrs, who would have braved a thousand deaths rather than renounce their faith, at once began to execute the evil which had been taught them, upon those whose consciences squared not with their own. Excommunication was the penalty for the most trifling offences. A gentlewoman, for example, was excommunicated for "objecting to the price of some joyner's work." To say that their church was a human invention was punished by a fine of £10; and a minister, upon one occasion, "for saying that another minister had a Brownisticall head, was *whipt* by order of the General Court." We are not disposed to invoke the shades of the Browns, nor of Samuel Maverick; nor to comment upon the treatment to which Roger Williams, Anne Hutchinson, and subsequently the Quakers, were subjected. The fact is, that toleration, religious toleration, so far from being considered a virtue at that day, was rather accounted a crime. We have no inclination to censure the Puritans of New England very severely for not having risen above the prejudices of the age throughout the world. It was not liberty of conscience which they came to establish, but the kingdom of the saints. Copes and corner caps, surplices and rings, rails round the altar,

genuflections at the name of Jesus, holy water and crosses, — these were the symbols they could not abide. They had crossed the water to avoid them, and they were determined not to tolerate them in New England. If the Plymouth people were incensed beyond endurance at Morton's pranks, and, squatters as they were themselves, could not refrain from inflicting Lynch law upon a man whose only offence was dancing round a Maypole upon his own ground, how much more unlikely were the dignified and wealthy magistrates of Massachusetts, strong in their charter and their patent, to permit the least deviation from the true path on the part of any indweller of their territory. To tolerate heresy in religion was in their eyes a heinous offence.

"Let men of God in courts and churches watch
For those who do a toleration hatch,
Lest that ill egg bring forth a cockatrice,
To poison all with heresy and vice."

So ran the commencement of some rugged verses found in the pocket of the grim Governor Dudley after his death; and his practice through life had been in accordance with his text. "He that is willing," says the simple cobbler of Agawam, "to tolerate any unsound opinion that his own may also be tolerated, though never so sound, will for a need hang God's Bible at the devil's girdle;" and again, with equal violence, "*Religio docenda est, non coercenda*, is a pretty piece of album Latinum for some kinde of throates that are willingly sore; but *Heresis dedocenda est, non permittenda* will be found in a farre better Diamoron for the Gargarismes this age wants."

In civil and political matters, too, the strictness of the government was not less apparent. Moreover, as a great majority of the population were not members of the church and not freemen, and as the General Court, after the magistracy had resigned their exclusive jurisdiction, came to exercise all the powers of parliament, king's bench, chancery, and star chamber, as they themselves avowed, it followed that those of the king's subjects, non-members, who happened to be tried for civil or ecclesiastical offences, would find the tribunal naturally prejudiced and unfavorable to them. The penalties inflicted upon the luckless criminals who incurred the displeasure of the Court were often of extraordinary

severity. To revile the magistrates was punished with banishment, whipping, and cropping of ears; the tongue convicted of cursing and swearing was bored through with a red hot iron. John Kempe, in 1639, for an offence against morality, was publicly whipped in Boston and Salem, and then *sold as a slave*.

But it was not only in religious and political matters of importance, that the colony was governed with the utmost strictness by the strange little theocratic aristocracy which was the first form of Massachusetts polity. A true picture of those early days would present this quaint, solemn, arbitrary government, keeping the people as tight as a drum; prying about and thrusting its primitive and patriarchal nose into everybody's business, and meddling with the most minute and trifling matters. Nowhere in the world was a stricter police established than in Massachusetts. The paternal government of Austria is nothing to it. Did a respectable married woman indulge in a fit of scolding, she was straightway seized, gagged, and set up before her own door as a spectacle, merely for having exercised the time-honored privilege of her sex. Did a stranger enter one of the two ordinaries or houses of entertainment in Boston, "he was presently followed," says Josselyn, "by one appointed to that office, who would thrust himself uninvited into his company, and if he called for more drinke than the officer thought in his judgment he could soberly bear away, he would presently countermand it, and appoint the proportion, beyond which he could not get one drop."

Not content with regulating their eating, drinking, and talking, the General Court, in 1634, turned its attention to the dress of both sexes, and ordained, among other matters relative to apparel, "that no person, either man or woman, shall make or wear any slashed clothes, other than one slash in each sleeve and another in the back." Also, all gold or silver girdles, hat-bands, and *beaver hats* were prohibited under penalty of forfeiture. A few years later, in August, 1639, the General Court forbade "healths to be dranked," under a penalty of 12*d.* for each offence. They also passed a new sumptuary act, which allowed "no lace or points on the clothing, and no garment to be made with short sleeves so as to expose the arms, and that no sleeve should be more than half an ell in the widest place." It called also for

“reformation in immoderate great breeches, knots of ribbon, broad shoulder bands, double ruffs and cuffs.”

Nevertheless, with all these defects, the colony was admirably governed in the main. One great right of freemen, the right of bearing arms, a highly necessary right to men planted suddenly among wild beasts and savages, was certainly not taken from the people. On the contrary, the government took care that all should be duly trained to self-defence. “There is no man who bears a head,” says Wood, (*New England’s Prospect*, 1639,) “but bears military arms; even boys of fourteen years of age are practised with men in military discipline every three weeks.” And they practised to some effect, as the records of the time prove, and as the Pequods learned to their cost.

On the whole, the social aspect of the little colony, after it had fairly taken root, was of a pious, hardy, and industrious people, governed by a board of deacons constituting a mild aristocracy. With all their primitive simplicity of habits, there seems to have been as much distinction of rank as could have well existed under such circumstances. “The grose goddons, or great masters,” says the splenetic Josselyn, “as also some of their merchants, are damnable rich; inexplicably proud and covetous, they receive your gifts but as a homage or tribute due to their transcendency, which is a fault their clergie are also guilty of.” It is a whimsical indication of the regard paid to rank and title by the colonists, that a Mr. Josias Plaistowe, at one of the early sessions of the General Court, was, for the crime of stealing, degraded from his order, and sentenced to be called plain Josias, without any prefix. Considering that scolding was punished with fine and pillory, and grumbling at the magistrates with banishment and mutilation, one would think either that the colonists held larceny as a comparatively venial offence, or that it was reckoned a severe misfortune to lose the handle to one’s name.

Still the government seems to have adapted itself gradually to the changing circumstances of the colony, and to have developed its capacities more and more as the state advanced. The people acquired a great portion of the political power, became prosperous and satisfied, and the foundation of a great empire was securely laid. This is the best proof of the virtues of the Pilgrims, and of the merits of the system which

they adopted. Compare the practical wisdom with which they, on the whole, seemed to have adapted themselves to circumstances, with the funny feudalities, for example, of Sir Ferdinando Gorges, or with that later and most comical of constitutions, the system devised by his serene highness, philosopher Locke. The gravity with which the doughty Sir Ferdinando informed the world of the "manner and form of government established for the ordering of public affairs," within his province of Sagadahock (now more generally called "Maine,") with his "chancellors and judge marshals, admirals and masters of ordnance, counsellors and cupbearers," is sufficiently diverting. All these makers of feudal constitutions for colonies were apt to forget one important thing. They made the most ample provision for governing the people, but forgot that there were no people to govern. They began to build at the top of the pyramid. They would have the flag wave from the turret before the foundation stone was laid, and their castles remained castles in the air. The descendants of Sir Ferdinando were glad to sell out their satrapcy for a trifle, and Mr. Locke was the first and last landgrave of South Carolina.

With all the faults of the system devised by the Puritans, it was a practical system. With all their foibles, with all their teasing, tyrannical, and arbitrary notions, the Pilgrims were lovers of liberty as well as sticklers for authority. The seeds of liberty contained in Puritanism expanded in the soil of England till they overthrew a throne which had stood six centuries. The same seeds in New England ripened after two centuries to an absolute democracy. It was not to be expected that the early magistrates, fresh from a despotic country, belonging themselves to the landed aristocracy of England, and occupied entirely with religious matters, should have thought of establishing a democracy; but it was to be expected that a love of liberty would have been cherished by them. It was cherished and soon bore its fruits. Nowhere can a better description of liberty be found than that given by Winthrop, in his defence of himself before the General Court on a charge of arbitrary conduct. "Nor would I have you mistake your own liberty," he says. "There is a freedom of doing what we list, without regard to law or justice; this liberty is indeed inconsistent with authority; but civil,

moral, and federal liberty consists in every man's enjoying his property and having the benefits of the laws of his country; which is very consistent with a due subjection to the civil magistrate."

That which was false in their system has perished; the true has remained, as it always must. Although there was an aristocratic tendency in a part of their polity, although the personal prejudices of their leaders were in favor of oligarchy, yet the aristocratic element withered up for want of sustenance. The private virtues of the aristocrats themselves diminished their political power. Winthrop, a man of large estate, spent his money like water for the colony, thus diminishing the distance of station between himself and his inferiors; and so with many others. But time proved that there was really nothing to interfere with the Demos. Upon what should a nobility be founded? The sword has founded most aristocracies; but their only foes, the Indians, were soon subdued, and the colonial sword was sheathed for centuries. Landed property has been the great bulwark of aristocracy; but in the wilderness territory was to be had almost for the asking. Imagine, for example, that Massachusetts had been an island of the same dimensions as its present territory, and surrounded, at the epoch of the first emigration, by powerful foreign states in a high state of civilization. Whoever can calculate what its population would now have been, had it been a state by itself, instead of being one of the main portals of a great Republic, may picture to himself a totally different condition of society from that which now exists. But from the first years of the colony, the population, obeying the law which seems to have been impressed upon them by destiny from the outset, began to spread themselves in all directions, — a mission which they have continued to fulfil, till the Rocky Mountains have at last been crossed, and New England has reached the Pacific. What should oppose the democratic principle, if the sword had lost its strength, and land its value? Surely, the supernatural power arrogated by the Lord's elect was destined to fade as a vapor. Citizens by the grace of God, holding their franchise by the same tenure with which monarchs hold their crowns, were not likely to retain their power forever, when the more substantial foundations of privileged orders had been found wanting. Nothing was more natural

than that New England colonization should have resulted in democracy, although that result was not contemplated in the original movement.

We have allowed ourselves to dwell more at length than we should otherwise have thought justifiable upon the early history of New England, because an elaborate work by a foreigner has suggested the subject, and because the present state of Europe necessarily recalls to the memory and the imagination the whole natural history of democracy. We enjoy an inestimable advantage in America. One can be a republican, a democrat, without being a radical. A *radical*, one who would *uproot*, is a man whose trade is dangerous to society. Here is but little to uproot. The trade cannot flourish. All classes are conservative by necessity, for none wish to change the structure of our polity. The democratic form of government is acquiesced in by all. The system, after which the popular heart of Europe is panting, and for which it is even now pouring out its life-blood, has been secured to us by a combination of circumstances, — the colonization of New England being among the most important.

But after all, what is the great cause which has made democracy inevitable in America, and seems at times to render it hopeless in Europe? It is the Past. In America, civilization was begun *de novo* by Europeans. Democracy was the only practical and philosophical *a priori* constitution for a country without a past. As we look down the vista of history, a period like that which separates us from the origin of our state seems but a single age. At this moment, upon the continent of Europe, the very houses where the people are born, and marry, and bring up their children, and die, are standing precisely as they were when the Mayflower first cast anchor at Plymouth; the whole aspect of the streets and squares is unchanged. The cathedral, where they worship, reflected the sunlight from its embroidered spire and its image-crowded turrets years before the foot of Columbus pressed the Indian strand. This age is after all the first age of America, its first epoch, the period of conquest, which yet is not half completed. Ours is a new empire, a country without a past.

The Past! Who can measure its effects upon the present condition, political or social, of the world? Who can exactly

weigh the metaphysical effect upon national character produced by the million memorials of its history? Every thing here is fresh, and of yesterday. The Present stretches to the Pilgrims; for the life of a nation is not measured by years. It is a strange spectacle, that of a country of an old civilization, and yet inexorably cut off from the birthright of all other states which have culminated to a high point of culture, — the birthright of a pictured, illuminated Past. Much the same aspect is presented now upon the western edge of our civilization that characterized Massachusetts two centuries ago. Our Past is alive and visible. Ask the old world of its Past. Gray Asia points to her silent Tadmors and Palmyras, where the fox dwells in the halls of forgotten princes; — to her vast tumuli, where dead cities, piled upon each other like coffins, with centuries of dust between them, have been sleeping in obscurity for ages. Egypt shows us her Pharaohs and her Miriams, embalmed for forty ages in their colossal tombs. China unrolls before our eyes the scrolls of her philosophers, shows us the course of comets calculated two thousand years ago, exhibits to us in the remote regions of the past a people familiar with the compass, with gunpowder, with anæsthetic agencies, with many of the boasted trophies of modern civilization, centuries before the present nations of Europe had emerged from barbarism. And Greece displays her marble temples glancing through her olive groves, with the forms of her heroes deified in matchless symmetry upon every shattered frieze — images of beauty which the succeeding world could but copy. Rome shows the sculptured arches beneath which rolled the triumphal procession of Scipio, the forum which has echoed to the voice of Tully, the cool groves and grottos, haunted by faun and satyr, where Horace sang.

Alas! with all these far-reaching memories appealing to the imagination in the older world, how naked and impoverished does America appear! And the more stirring memorials of an even more recent, and yet a vanished, epoch perhaps excite our sympathies the more. Who can describe the emotion produced upon his mind by the first sight of a ruined castle, by an old, gray, battered, shattered relic of the feudal age, even if it be enriched by no special memory and hallowed by no familiar name? Who can gauge the exact effect produced upon national character, the strength of the con-

servative feeling nourished by the constant presence of such memorials in lands where every hill-top is crowned with its ruined tower, where every valley embosoms its ivy-mantled abbey, where fable and romantic legend have lent a name and a charm to every forest, mountain, rock, and river? How many bayonets to support the wrong reside in the ballads of chivalry, in the minnesinger's minstrelsy, in the Niebelungenlied, in Walter Scott's romance? Who can unravel the magic web which is woven over individual and national character by these subtle influences, which appeal to the more sentimental and imaginative, although not the least potent principles of human nature, but which have not their vitality except in the lands to which they belong? Chevy Chase, Ivanhoe, and the Orlando Furioso may be read to-day in Wisconsin; but America reads them as she reads Æsop's fables. The country without a Past cannot be intoxicated by visions of the Past of other lands.

Upon this absence of the Past, it seems to us that much of the security of our institutions depends. Nothing interferes with the development of what is now felt to be the true principle of government, the will of the people legitimately expressed. To establish that great truth, nothing was to be torn down, nothing to be uprooted. It grew up in New England out of the seed unconsciously planted by the first Pilgrims, was not crushed by the weight of a thousand years of error, spread over the whole continent, and the Revolution was proclaimed and recognized.

We have no intention of turning at this moment to the subject of European politics; but our apology for this long article upon a stale topic is, that America is now holding the mirror up to Europe. She has, without a trope, become the model republic; her constitutions and laws are studied with profound attention by the statesmen of Europe, and hardly a debate takes place in France or Germany in which the theory and practice of America are not discussed. The contemplation of the causes which have made us what we are is as useful for ourselves. The study is important at home and abroad. In Europe, before the republic can be successfully produced, every thing must be uprooted. Physical obstructions must be levelled, metaphysical obstructions must be dissolved. There, the Present is battling with the Past.

Here, a naked and orphan Present is preparing the way for a giant Future.

It is true that we have no Past, no mist, no myths. We had one hero of romance, but his name was John Smith. That warrior's steel corslet and peaked beard, his perilous adventures by flood and field, in every land, among Moslems or Savages, Infidels or Christians, the charms of his Turkish princess and of the gentle Pocahontas, are all associated with the early chapter of New England colonization, and are preserved to posterity in the elegant narrative of Hillard. To the northern promontory of Massachusetts Bay, now called Cape Ann, he gave the name of his Saracen heroine, Tragabizanda; three islands in the neighborhood, in memory of his most brilliant exploit, he called the Turks' heads. "Not one of these names," says Talvj, "has posterity been grateful enough to preserve." (p. 12.) Posterity has been neither grateful nor romantic, and rejoices rather in such appellations as the Little Gooseberries, Loblolly Cove, Tinker's Island, and the Sow and Pigs, by which the main features of the coast have since been designated.

America has no Past, but she has a Future. The possible Future of this country is as exciting to the imagination as the vague and fading Past of other lands. We are now but in our first epoch, as what exists, what has been done, seems, as it were, but the fragments of the future. The Future seems more than anywhere else to be grappled to the Present in a country which has been so rudely and abruptly severed from all connection with the Past. The Future of America! As from a few broken columns at Agrigentum or Corinth, the imagination builds up the whole fabric of two thousand years ago, so from what exists at present upon our soil, a vision of what is to come rises before us in vast and misty proportions. These thirty States are but the fragments, but a few isolated shafts, of the great peristyle which is to stretch from the Atlantic to the Pacific portico of this great temple of democracy. Never before was so vast an empire imagined for the Republic, for the self-governing people. The actual progress of the nation in every thing connected with its contests with material obstacles, the daily conquests made here by civilization over nature, embolden the mind to almost any speculation. A century is but a short time in the life of a nation.

It is nearly a century since Washington fought with Braddock at Monongahela, since Wolfe fell upon the Heights of Abraham. To the mind accustomed to the contemplation of history, these events are but of yesterday. Yet when another century shall have elapsed, America may very possibly be a state compact and yet confederated, numbering three hundred millions of freemen, occupying a region of three millions of square miles, with every known climate and product, with cities of four or five millions of population, with a commerce external and internal such as the world never imagined, distinguished, as from present indications it is reasonable to conclude, for its progress in those beautiful arts which embellish life and appeal to the higher parts of a nation's character, as well for those useful ones by which the happiness and comfort of its citizens are secured, and with a government which professes so remarkable facility at adapting itself to the expansive tendencies of the people that it seems capable of lasting for many centuries. Such a state in the possible, and not very remote, Future may well excite the imagination. A state, too, in whose progress the general cause of humanity is benefited; a state opening wide its Eastern and Western portals to all the nations, cutting through continents, uniting oceans, and smoothing down the great natural barriers of its rocky mountains, as sedulously as its antipodal China conceals its ancient civilization and its teeming millions behind its gigantic artificial wall. Such a state, the reverse of the Chinese empire, and more powerful and prosperous than the Chinese and the Russian united, is as fruitful a theme for speculation as the probable conditions of the Assyrian or the Persian empire, thousands of years ago. Such a possible Future atones for the absence of the Past.

It seems not unreasonable to conclude that our present system may last for ages. The differences of soil and climate, and the imagined conflicts of interest, are as great now as they can ever become. The territory is more extensive and the parts farther separated than they will be a century hence. Those inventions which make our Republic possible, railroads, steam, canals, telegraphs, the printing press, are uniting the distant parts of the confederacy more closely every day. The centripetal force of the Republic will increase rather than diminish. The chain once broken, the States fly

into chaos, and are sure never to reunite. The people of Germany, sprung from one stock, speaking the same language, educated for ages under the same civilization, but broken up into eight-and-thirty sovereign and independent States, and now striving, but striving in vain, to annihilate their discordant Past and to construct one great, consistent, and homogeneous whole, are a melancholy type of what may be the destiny of the United States, should the cry of disunion prevail. If the Union lasts, the vision of American grandeur will probably be realized.

Whether the example is, upon the whole, good for Europe is a more difficult matter to decide. The character of the early Pilgrims of New England, the vast and unoccupied territory, the absence of a Past, the entire deficiency of castes and classes, have made the empire of democracy possible upon this continent. None of these causes exist in Europe. Neither is it easy to furnish the elements of a federal system there. The combination in our system of self-governed States, revolving round a central government, seems to us, who have known no other, as natural as the planetary system, and to be governed by as inevitable laws. The manner in which self-government is diffused throughout, the regularity with which each State revolves upon its own axis, and yet moves in its orbit around the centre of the system, the great natural law of reproduction within itself, under which there seems a constant scaling off of material from the organized part into the distance, to revolve in the nebulous condition of territories for a time, until agglomerating to States, it forms recognized and inhabitable portions of the system, the harmonious discord by which the centripetal and centrifugal forces keep all nature's peace,—all these elementary characteristics of our polity, are wanting in Europe, and are indigenous to our world.

We fear that the reader of this long article will not sympathize with us; but we are, upon the whole, glad to have had a new opportunity to contemplate the granite character of New England in its primary condition, and we are therefore glad to have met with this work of Mrs. Robinson. The events of the last few years in Europe have given to that character a fresh importance. New England is not America, to be sure; but she has been so long the great portal through which the tide of population and civilization has flowed, she

has been so long the nursing mother of states, and shorn of her own natural proportions, she has seen her own image so often reproduced and reflected in the West,

“ Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
In every fragment multiplies,

that the New England character has become one of the main elements to which the stability of the democratic principle is owing. Massachusetts is as absolute a democracy as ever existed. But it is a government of law, under which life and property are secure. We wish that our republican friends across the water could learn a lesson or two from the New England character. Their republican progress would be facilitated by the study. There is a sternness, an iron common sense about it, which has descended from the Puritans. It is the solid foundation of this Republic.

Yet after all, this character is only rugged and hard upon its exterior crust. As twenty-five miles below the earth's surface, granite is in a state of fusion, so the New England character is warm and fluid enough beneath a cold exterior. The inhabitants of Massachusetts make few epigrams about liberty and equality; but the democratic principle is more deeply fixed here than anywhere else. They are not given to saying fine things. Their republicanism and their philanthropy are of a commonplace character. They do not cut each other's throats and burn each other's houses to establish the principle of fraternity among men, after the French manner. They have very seldom the cry of brotherhood upon their lips; but if Massachusetts has cause to be proud of any thing, it is that the principle is deeply fixed in her breast. Nowhere in the world are nobler institutions dedicated to the Christian virtues. By no State in the world have the wealth and talents of its best citizens been more lavishly employed to improve and reform the condition of the forsaken, the helpless, and the fallen.

But we are going farther and faster than we intended. Having finished our reflections on Puritan character and polity, in their primary and present condition, we are again reminded of the querulous Theodore de la Gard: — “ We have a strong weakness in New England, that when we are speaking we know not how to conclude; we make many ends before we make an end; the fault is in the climate.”